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Mr. Hoover

19 January 1951

Abbot Smith

Final Version of NIE 21: Austrian Treaty

1. On reading the printed proofs of NIE 21, I see that the IAC has at the last minute contrived to emasculate the conclusions. We now are on record as saying that if the USSR estimates that US reaction to a satellite invasion of Austria would be feeble, then a satellite invasion is likely.

2. This may be true, of course. But since no one knows or is likely to know what the Kremlin estimate of our reactions is, it amounts to saying that we have no clear opinion on whether or not the satellites are likely to invade.

3. Actually, most of us think that the satellites are unlikely to invade anyway (except in a general war). This opinion is based mainly on the following line of reasoning:

(a) If the USSR signs a treaty and gets out of Austria, it will probably be because the USSR considers Austria of but little account, and is ready to give up a position there in order to gain a position somewhere else. The only circumstance we can think of under which the USSR is likely to conclude an Austrian Treaty is one of bargaining over Germany.

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(b) Granting that the USSR considers Austria of little importance, is it likely that a real risk of global war will be accepted for the sake of Austria? Answer is obviously no.

(c) Since the Kremlin cannot be certain of our reactions, it must consider that a satellite invasion of Austria would involve a real risk of global war. Hence, no invasion.

4. I doubt if these reasonings were gone through by the IAC members. The result seems to be that NIE 21 fails to give a good answer to one of the important questions which ought to have been answered.

5. This memorandum is merely for the record; I do not presume that the Austrian matter is of transcendent importance. But the case of NIE 21 is a good illustration of what can happen to a project. As it now stands, we have said practically nothing that could not better have been said by G-2 of US Forces in Austria.

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